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BOOK THREE:

X-MEN

MEN & X-MEN

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CHRIS CLAREMONT • SEAN CHEN

PREVIOUSLY

LOOKING BACK, THE THING I REMEMBER, THE THING BACK THEN WE ALWAYS FORGOT, WAS HOW YOUNG WE WERE.

THAT THE X-MEN STARTED OUT AS STUDENTS AT PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS.

WE WERE ALL PART OF THE CRUSADE--WAS THAT WHY IT NEVER CROSSED OUR COLLECTIVE MINDS THAT WE WERE CHILDREN?

BY THE TIME I WAS OLD ENOUGH TO VOTE, I'D SEEN MORE PITCHED BATTLES THAN I CAN EASILY RECALL. I'D BEEN TO THE STARS, I'D FACED OFF AGAINST GODS, FOUGHT DEMONS AND MONSTERS, TRAVELED IN TIME, SEEN FRIENDS DIE AND KILLED.

I BELIEVED OUR CAUSE WAS JUST--DID THAT THEN MAKE MY HEART PURE FOR SIMPLY PAPER OVER THE POWERS?



ALIYA BISHOP,
MAJESTRIX SHI'AR

LUCAS BISHOP,
FATHER AND IMPERIAL CHANCELLOR

IN SO MANY WAYS, CHARLES XAVIER WAS THE MOST DECENT AND HONORABLE AND CARING MAN I'VE EVER KNOWN. BUT I REALIZE NOW, HE WAS ALSO THE MOST RUTHLESS.

TAKE AWAY THE MUTANT THING, MOVE HIS OPERATION TO SOMALIA, CALL HIM A WARLORD--HOW DO WE JUDGE HIM THEN?

I THINK THAT WAS WHY, ON CHANDILAR, WHEN CASSANDRA NOVA STRODE OUT TO FACE THE X-MEN ONCE MORE, WEARING THE PROFESSOR'S BODY AS HER OWN, NONE OF US WERE REALLY SURPRISED.

XAVIER AND CASSANDRA DIDN'T SEEM TO US LIKE TWINS, THEY WERE MORE LIKE JANUS--TWO FACES, SHARING A SINGLE SOUL, MORE ALIKE IN SO MANY WAYS THAN EITHER WOULD DARE ADMIT.

AND THEIR STRUGGLE, ALMOST FROM CONCEPTION, WAS FOR WHICH ANGEL OF THEIR NATURE WOULD RULE.

THE BIG DIFFERENCE THIS TIME WAS THAT CASSANDRA HAD UPPED THE STAKES: IF THE X-MEN LOST, SHE'D LAY WASTE TO ALL CREATION.

THE POLLS ARE STILL OPEN, AND THE MAYORAL RACE REMAINS TOO CLOSE TO CALL, WITH REPORTS COMING IN FROM ALL PRECINCTS OF THE HEAVIEST VOTER TURNOUT IN A GENERATION.

OUTGOING MAYOR RICHARD BAZONOFF VISITED WITH THE PARENTS OF SLAIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT, JAKE DELILLO...

DAMMIT, FORREST, THIS COMES FROM THE CANDIDATE--

CAMPAIGN MANAGER MARIE D'ANCANTO

--TELL THE VOLUNTEERS TO STOP CANVASSING. ONE DEAD KID IS ONE TOO MANY.

KITTY DOESN'T WANT TO PUT ANYONE ELSE AT RISK.

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER VANCE WHEEDON

FORREST, BRING THE KIDS OVER HERE FOR THE PARTY.

WIN OR LOSE, WE'LL RAISE THE ROOF!

CORRESPONDENT MANOLI WETHERELL

SEEMS PRETTY TENSE.

WHAT A SURPRISE.

HOW'S IT FEEL, BEING IN THE HOME STRETCH?

PART OF ME WISHES IT WAS THE OLD DAYS.

LIFE WAS SIMPLER AND MORE FUN, WITH A WHOLE LOT MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO BE GLORIOUSLY IRRESPONSIBLE!

OR SO...IT SEEMED.



SO--WHAT'S
IT MEAN IF
YOU WANT?

THAT MUTANTS
NOW HAVE THE SAME
GOD-GIVEN RIGHT AS
EVERYONE ELSE TO
SCREW UP THE
SYSTEM?



SERIOUSLY.

WE HAVE
TALENTS, MAN! I!
WE HAVE GIFTS,
WE HAVE WANTS
AND NEEDS AND
ASPIRATIONS.

WE HAVE
DREAMS.

NO MATTER
WHAT WE LOOK
LIKE, WE'RE
HUMAN.

WHY CAN'T WE HELP
MAKE A DIFFERENCE,
JUST LIKE EVERYONE
ELSE?

DON'T YOU
ACCOMPLISH
THAT, SIMPLY BY
EXISTING?

"TRY TELLING THAT TO
ALICE TREMAINE, WHO
WISHES WE DIDN'T."

"IT TOOK US YEARS TO CLAW
OUR WAY OUT OF THE GULLAG.
STOP TRYING TO MARGINALIZE
US. INSTEAD, TRY EMBRACING
US. USE OUR ASSETS FOR THE
COMMON GOOD."



"EVOLUTION IS ANOTHER WORD FOR
GROWTH. IT HAPPENS WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR
NOT, AN INMUTABLE REALITY OF NATURE."

"HOPE TAKES US ONE WAY.
FEAR ANOTHER--AS SOME
OF US HAVE LEARNED TO
UNIMAGINABLE COST."



I RUN BECAUSE
I WANT TO MAKE
TOMORROW BETTER
THAN TODAY.

FOR
ALL OF
US!

Ⓢ THE STARJAMMER

WITHIN THE MAW OF A GIANT ACANTI (SPACE-WHALE), CURRENTLY APPROACHING THE SHI'AR THRONEWORLD CHANDILAR...

EXCUSE ME, GIRL?

WHO DID YOU SAY YOU ARE?

I-I'M AL'DIAH.

MY MOM WAS THE CROWN PRINCESS, CAL'SYEE NERAMANI.

YOU-- YOU'RE MY DAD.

YOUR MOTHER-- DEATHBIRD-- SHE NEVER TOLD ME.

BUT SHE HAD TO SAVE THE EMPIRE FIRST.

SHE WASN'T SO GREAT ON THE FAMILY TOGETHERNESS, HEARTH-AND-HOME SIDE OF THINGS.

BEFORE SHE GOT THE CHANCE TO LEARN--

--SHE DIED.

BUT SHE ALWAYS LOVED YOU.

SHE WANTED TO, I THINK.

Their Final Hour!

BY CHRIS CLAREMONT & SEAN CHEN

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YOU'RE--MY--
DAUGHTER!



IT WAS A MOMENT
LUCAS BISHOP NEVER
THOUGHT HE'D LIVE
TO SEE. THE FANTASY
HE ALWAYS BELIEVED
WAS BEYOND THE
PALE--THAT HE WOULD
HAVE A CHILD.

HE'D ALWAYS CONSIDERED HIMSELF
AN OUTCAST AMONG OUTCASTS,
FOREVER APART FROM THE X-MEN
EVEN AS HE FOUGHT BY THEIR SIDE.

HE WAS A MAN WHO'D KEPT HIMSELF
ALCOOF FROM TIES OUT OF SELF-
PRESERVATION, BECAUSE HE COULD
NO LONGER ENDURE THE PAIN OF
LOSING THOSE HE CARED FOR.

A FAMILY WAS UNTHINKABLE. IT
MADE HIM VULNERABLE IN WAYS
HE DARED NOT AFFORD.

ONLY NOW--IT WAS AS IF SOME GREAT
AND CREAKY VAULT-DOOR HAD SWUNG
OPEN IN HIS HEART, ADMITTING A CRISP,
FRESH, BRACING WIND OF PROMISE AND
POSSIBILITIES.

HOW WAS HE TO KNOW THAT
WITHIN THE BODY OF THIS GIRL
WAS THE IMPLANTED EMBRYO OF
A BROOD MOTHER-QUEEN?

THAT EVEN AS FATHER AND
CHILD EMBRACED IN A WILD
MIX OF LAUGHTER AND TEARS,
THAT TAINTED PART OF
ALYAH GLEEFULLY PLOTTED
HIS ANNIHILATION?



BISHOP—
ALDYAH—
REPORT TO THE
BRIDGE.

WHO'RE
YOU?

I AM SAGE.
CONSIDER ME
THE X-MEN'S
MENTAT.

WHERE'S
CAROL?!



CAROL
DANVERS
IS DEAD.

IN HER PLACE,
I CONTROL THE
STARJAMMER'S
COMMAND
NEXUS.



AND
ELISABETTA,
TOO—MEIN
GOTT!

I LOST
TRACK OF HER
DURING THE FIGHT,
I ASSUMED SHE'D
BE ALL RIGHT.

TOTAL
TOAST.

WHAT
ABOUT THE
BROOD?



PSYLOCKE
IS NOT OUR ONLY
CASUALTY. NIGHT-
CRAWLER. NOR WILL
SHE BE THE LAST.

YOU ARE NEEDED
URGENTLY ON THE
SURFACE. STAND BY
FOR TRANSPORT.



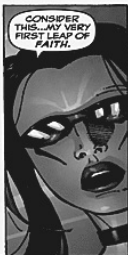
HAVE
A NICE
TRIP.

ALL OUR PIECES
ARE IN PLAY, ELISABETH.
YOU'RE OUR ACE IN THE
HOLE. EVERYTHING RESTS
ON YOU.



ABSOLUTELY
CERTAIN, ARE
YOU?

ACTUALLY,
I THOUGHT THIS
ONCE I'D TRUST
MY INSTINCTS.



CONSIDER
THIS...MY VERY
FIRST LEAP OF
FAITH.

CHARLES XAVIER WAS
THE GREATEST MUTANT
MIND ON EARTH.

BEFORE ANY TIME ON THE X-MEN, HE
USED THAT TELEPATHIC POWER TO
HARNESS THE PSYCHIC POTENTIAL OF
VIRTUALLY EVERY MIND ON EARTH,
AND USED IT TO REPEL A MARAUDING
ALIEN RACE CALLED THE Z'NOX.

HE DID SO WITHOUT CAUSING
THE SLIGHTEST LASTING HARM
TO ANYONE, ON EITHER SIDE.

CASSANDRA NOVA
WAS NO BETTER WAY TO
SAY IT) HIS EVIL TWIN.

JUST AS POWERFUL
IN HER OWN RIGHT.

NOW SHE'D CLAIMED HIS ABILITIES AS
HER OWN, TO USE ON THE PEOPLE
OF CHANDLAR. JUST AS XAVIER HAD
DONE AGAINST THE Z'NOX.

ONLY SHE TOOK IT
ALL, WHICH TURNED
THIS WORLD INTO A
CHARNEL HOUSE.

X-MEN AND SHI'AR
SUPERGUARDIANS--

--WHO AMONG
YOU CONSIDERS
THEMSELVES A
MATCH FOR ME?

AND THEN SHE TURNED
THE FULL FORCE OF THOSE
TERRIBLE, TITANIC ENERGIES
ON THE LAST FOLKS LEFT
TO OPPOSE HER.



YARRGH!



OWUFF!



FORGIVE ME, CHARLES.

CASSANDRA'S JUST TOO DANGEROUS.



I CAN'T SEE ANY OTHER WAY.



**BRAVO,
CYCLOPS!**

**I AM
IMPRESSED.**

**SUCH A SHAME
THAT COMBINING
POWERS WITH MY
DEAR BROTHER
ALLOWS ME TO
TRANSCEND
CORPOREALITY.**



**POSSESSING
A PHYSICAL
BODY HAS ITS
MOMENTS.**



**BUT I'M
LEARNING QUITE
NICELY TO DO
WITHOUT.**



**WRETCHED
CREATURE!**

**ADAMANTIUM
IS SO DENSE
THOSE CLAWS
COULD ACTUALLY
HURT ME.**



**SO MUCH OF
YOU IS DERIVED
FROM WOLVERINE'S
TEMPLATE.**

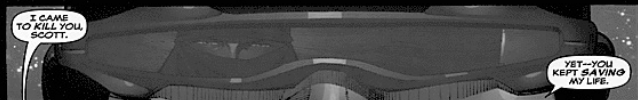
**DO YOU
HAVE HIS ABILITY
TO HEAL?**



DON'T LAUGH
YOU SUCK
CASSANDRA.
I HAVE
RESOURCES
YOU CAN'T EVEN
IMAGINE!

...THE
LESS YOU HAVE TO
RESIST YOUR OWN
CHRONIC, INCURABLE
INFECTION.

OH,
PEARL!
IT APPEARS
YOU POOR
BOY, THAT THE
MORE ENERGY
YOU EXPEND
ON ME...





WHAT'S
THIS,
THEN?

IS CABLE
DRAWING STRENGTH
FROM OTHERS, EVEN
AS I DO?



WE CAN'T
HAVE THAT.



DOES YOUR
ARM HURT,
SWEETNESS?

THE PAIN MUST BE
EXORCIZING.

WE SHOULD
SEEK OUT
THE PERSON
RESPONSIBLE.



LOOK!

POOR
CYCLOPS HAS BEEN
SUBORNED
BY THE WILES OF HIS
DEMENTED EX-WIFE,
WHO'S SLAUGHTERED
POOR SOORAYA.



SAVE HIM,
X-23, BE THE
HERO!



KILL
MADELYNE!

RRRRRAGH!





LAURA--X-23,
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING?!



WASTING MY
BREATH.



SHE'S IN A
BERSERKER
FURY, AS BAD AS
WOLVERINE!



REASON
WON'T WORK, SHE'S
BEYOND RATIONAL
THOUGHT.



IF I BLAST
HER TOO HARD,
WE LOSE
A MAJOR
ASSET.



BUT I REALLY
DON'T WANT TO
GET TAGGED
MYSELF...



NO!

SHE'S NOT
ATTACKING
ME--

THIS HAS TO BE
CASSANDRA'S
DOING.

--SHE'S AFTER
MADDIE!

I WAS
JUST IN THE
WAY!

...MAYBE
I CAN TURN
THAT TO OUR
ADVANTAGE.

BUT IF HER
INFLUENCE
OVER LAURIE
IS LIMITED...

A black and white comic panel showing Jean Grey in a berserker state. She has long, dark hair and is wearing a dark, form-fitting suit. She is shown from the chest up, with her mouth open in a scream and her eyes wide. The background is dark and smoky.

FACED WITH A
POTENTIALLY
UNCONTROLLABLE
BERSERKER...

A black and white comic panel showing Slipstream, a character with long dark hair and a dark suit, attacking Cyclops. Slipstream is in a dynamic pose, lunging forward with her arm extended. Cyclops is visible in the background, looking on. The ground is rocky and uneven.

...SLIPSTREAM DID THE
PRUDENT THING, JUST
AS CYCLOPS EXPECTED.

A black and white comic panel showing Cyclops in a telepathic network. He is wearing his visor and is shown from the chest up, with his arms outstretched. The background is dark and smoky.

AND ONCE AGAIN, CYCLOPS DEMONSTRATED THE
ADVANTAGE OF FIGHTING WITHIN A TELEPATHIC NETWORK.

A black and white comic panel showing Mindbender, a character with long dark hair and a dark suit, attacking Cyclops. Mindbender is in a dynamic pose, lunging forward with her arm extended. Cyclops is visible in the background, looking on. The ground is rocky and uneven.

MINDBEE (THIRD OF
THE THREE SPIKES)
BACK ON EARTH WAS
PRETTY MUCH
OUT OF THE LOOP...

A black and white comic panel showing Cyclops on the ground. He is lying on his back, with his head tilted back and his mouth open in a scream. His eyes are closed, and his face is contorted in pain. The ground is rocky and uneven.

...BUT PHOEBE AND CELESTE WERE
IN CLOSE-ENOUGH PROXIMITY TO
ESTABLISH A REAL-TIME PSILINK.

A black and white comic panel showing Jean Grey in a berserker state. She has long, dark hair and is wearing a dark, form-fitting suit. She is shown from the chest up, with her mouth open in a scream and her eyes wide. The background is dark and smoky.

...ALLOWING SCOTT
TO KNOW PRECISELY
WHAT ASSETS HE
COULD BRING INTO
PLAY...

A black and white comic panel showing Cyclops attacking Jean Grey. Cyclops is in a dynamic pose, lunging forward with his arm extended. Jean Grey is visible in the background, looking on. The ground is rocky and uneven.

...AND WHAT TO
DO WITH THEM...

A black and white comic panel showing Cyclops attacking Jean Grey. Cyclops is in a dynamic pose, lunging forward with his arm extended. Jean Grey is visible in the background, looking on. The ground is rocky and uneven.

X--THAT
COOCON--
FREE JEAN!

AS FOR WHERE NIGHTCRAWLER
AND NOCTURNE CAME FROM...

LILANDRA'S
THRONE ROOM!

WHAT A
MESS!

NIGHTCRAWLER!
NOCTURNE! CYCLOS
NEEDS YOU! WE'LL
PROVIDE TEL-E-PORT
COORDINATES!

MY GOD,
WHAT'S
HAPPENED
HERE?!

THAT'S XAVI,
THE IMPERIAL
HEIR—

—MAYBE
HE KNOWS!

SEE TO YOUR
FRIENDS, BISHOP.
I'LL FIND OUT!

ALIYAH, BE
CAREFUL!

RACHEL HAS A
P.L.S.E., BUT THE
OTHERS—!

END OF
THE LINE,
COUSIN!

I QUITE
AGREE.

THIS WASN'T
PART OF THE
ORIGINAL DEAL,
MOTHER-
QUEEN.

YOU'RE
SUPPOSED
TO BE ON
MY SIDE.



THE BROOD
DO NOT SERVE.
PRETENDER, WE
RULE!

THEN
I'M AFRAID THIS
BETRAYAL VOIDS
YOUR SOVEREIGN
IMMUNITY--



+OLXOKI+



THE BROOD
DO NOT DIE
SO EASILY.



CAN YOU
TELL WHAT'S
HAPPENING?

GIMME
A BREAK,
BISHOP.

GO ONE-ON-ONE
WITH CASSANDRA NOVA
AND SEE HOW COHERENT
YOUR THOUGHTS ARE
AFTERWARDS--

--ASSUMING
YOU SURVIVE.



XAVI TRIED
TO KILL ME.

HE WAS
BOASTING--
THAT HE HAD SLAIN
THE MAJESTRIX.
LILANDRA WASN'T
RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY OF
THIS--



--IT WAS
XAVI

ALL THIS TIME,
HE WAS HOST TO
THE SOUL OF THE
"MAMENITY"!

AND AT
THAT VERY
MOMENT,
BACK
OUTSIDE...

I'M
FREE!





NATHAN!



DON'T BE ANGRY, DON'T BE UPSET--

--NOT ANY OF YOU.

I GAVE HER ALL I HAD.



CASSANDRA WAS TOO POWERFUL, WE COULDN'T TAKE THE RISK.

NO, OH NO, OH NO

I GAVE HER ALL I HAD.

WE HAVE TO SAVE HIM!



MOM!

DON'T, PLEASE.

I'M REALLY TIRED.



CAN'T YOU JUST LET ME REST?



BOTH HIS BODY AND SOUL ARE DEEPLY TAINTED BY THE WORK OF APOCALYPSE AND SINISTER.

WE CAN NEVER PURGE THAT POISON.

PERHAPS THIS IS FOR THE BEST.

... NO.



I DUNNO ABOUT THAT, KURT.

YOU'D BE SURPRISED AT WHAT PHOENIX CAN DO.

CHICAGO

THE POLLS HAVE
BEEN CLOSED FOR
OVER AN HOUR AND
WITH ABOUT 60%
OF THE PRECINCTS
REPORTING...

...THE MAYORAL
RACE REMAINS
TOO CLOSE TO
CALL!

THIS COULD
BE A VERY LONG
NIGHT.

YOU'RE A
MIRACLE.

NOT ME.
NOT US.
THEM.

NATHAN...

...AND
RACHEL.

THAT'S MY
DARLIN'.

OUR KIDS
ARE WHAT
MATTER.

AND WITH 92%
OF THE PRECINCTS
REPORTING...

--WE HAVE
A PROJECTED
WINNER!





WE WERE
ONLY HUMAN.



WAS THAT OUR
MISTAKE?



ALWAYS ONE FATAL STEP
BEHIND THE CURVE...



...BECAUSE OUR
ADVERSARY
SPLIT THE DISTANCE
BETWEEN US AND
THE DIVINE?



HINSIGHT'S ALWAYS
TWENTY-TWENTY,
DON'T YOU KNOW?



THROUGH ALL THAT
CHAOS, ESPECIALLY AFTER
CABLE COLLAPSED...



...IT NEVER OCCURRED TO
SCOTT TO WONDER HOW...



...IN THE MOST
TELEPATHICALLY
SECURE LOCATION
IN KNOWN SPACE...



...AGAINST A FOE WHO'D
ADDED CHARLES XAVIER'S
PSYCHIC POWERS TO
HER OWN...



...HE COULD COMMUNICATE
TELEPATHICALLY WITH HIS
TEAM WITHOUT INTERFERENCE?

HE WAS A
BRILLIANT
TACTICIAN...

HEAR ME,
X-MEN!

NO
LONGER
AM I THE
WOMAN YOU
KNEW!

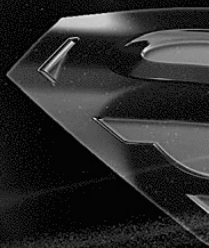
...BUT TO CASSANDRA NOVA,
THE DEFENSES OF HIS MIND
WERE TRANSPARENT AS AIR.

NOW AND
FOREVER--

FROM THE
VERY START,
WE DIDN'T HAVE
A PRAYER.

--CASSANDRA
NOVA IS
PHOENIX!

NEXT:
Come the
New Dawn?



EDITS B

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KRYPTON

